

April 2008

UAS to Host Nuclear Awareness Conference

Survivors and activists of the bombing of Hiroshima and the 1950s nuclear testing of the Marshall Islands will speak.

By: Freelancer Forest Kvasnikoff

AUKE BAY - In accordance with the Hiroshima Peace Museum, The Marshall Island Government, Veteran's for Peace, Alpha Phi Omega (Alpha Zeta Theta Chapter) and UAS Chancellor's office, the University of Alaska Southeast will be holding a three day event: The Nuclear Awareness Conference. The conference is to be held Friday, April 18 from 6-10 p.m., April 19 from 12-5:30 p.m. and April 20 from 12-7 p.m..

The conference will include keynote talks by Shigeko Sasamori—a survivor of the bombing of Hiroshima, Mayor James Matayoshi—an activist on behalf of the Marshallese people in the aftermath of the nuclear testing conducted by the United States and Dr. Holly Barker—an author and senior advisor to the Marshallese government.

Numerous presentations will be conducted by Andrew Himes, founder of Voices in Wartime and the Juneau Veterans for Peace.

The conference will also feature performances by Skagway and Haines high school drama and debate teams.

Other activities include an open Poetry and Prose reading, a documentary film series and an educational workshop for teachers directed by Andy Himes.

The Nuclear Awareness Conference itself stems from a project-based educational venture conducted by Skagway High School's Kent Fielding—an English Teacher—and two of his students: Shelby Surdyk and Erica Harris.

Through their extensive research into Marshallese culture and history, the three developed a passion about the Marshallese people and a desire to educate others about the effects of nuclear proliferation and nuclear testing.

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http://www.uas.alaska.edu/whalesong/archives/2008/04_2008/2nuclearawareness.html

After traveling and performing in the Marshall Islands, Fielding and his students capitalized on an opportunity given by the Hiroshima Peace Museum to host Shigeko Sasamouri to speak about her experiences following the bombing of Hiroshima in 1945.

Given the subject matter, Fielding and his high school students sought to bring a speaker from the Marshall Islands, which sparked the interest of both Mayor James Matayoshi and Dr. Holly Barker, who will be speaking at the conference.

Other speakers and presenters throughout the conference have been brought together by a mutual interest concerning nuclear technology and wartime.

The conference will be held at the University of Alaska Southeast's Egan building.

Further questions and comments should be directed towards the events organizing sponsor, the UAS Alpha Phi Omega (Alpha Zeta Theta Chapter) at apo@uas.alaska.edu

Senator Ellis Sponsors Financial Assistance for Postsecondary Education

Sen. Johnny Ellis and Rep. David Guttenberg have introduced bills to help reduce the costs of higher education for those students who demonstrate academic success as well as financial need.

By: Press Release

JUNEAU - Senate Majority Leader Johnny Ellis (D-Anchorage) and Representative David Guttenberg (D-Fairbanks) have introduced bills—SB 302 and HB 397—to help reduce the costs of higher education for those students who demonstrate academic success as well as financial need.

Co-sponsors in the House are Scott Kawasaki (D-Fairbanks), Mary Nelson (D-Bethel) and Beth Kerttula (D-Juneau). Existing scholarship programs available in the state do not provide the resources needed to provide financial support to all students who are in need.

Alaska's high school graduation rates are among the lowest in the country. The National Center for Education Statistics reported that Alaska ranks 42nd in high school graduation rates at 61%.

By providing the opportunity for low income students to achieve postsecondary education, more students may be encouraged to complete high school. Of those students who do graduate, only 46% go directly to the university.

A recent study assessing reasons students have dropped out of college found that a major reason was their inability to afford escalating costs. The availability of financial assistance may have prevented this and improved the likelihood of student success.

The legislation proposed will establish the Alaska Achievers Incentive Program within the Alaska Commission on Postsecondary Education. It will also create an Alaska Achievers Scholarship Fund as a separate state endowment fund.

Representative Guttenberg stated that “this program will increase educational opportunities for more bright, hardworking, and capable Alaskans so that they may be ready to fill Alaskan jobs.

This is a program for Alaska residents based on achievement and financial need,” Senator Ellis said. Alaska is among the best in providing student loans but is the worst in providing financial aid. We are preventing students from achieving their potential and in turn benefiting the social and economic development of the state.

Student Events Require Student Input

Student involvement in University-sponsored activities is largely unpredictable.

By: Matt Voelckers



Photo by Matt Voelckers
Business Administration major Chris Trump squares off against Biology major Lucas Baranovic in a Sumo Battle at the REC.

AUKE BAY

On the gymnasium floor of the Student Recreation Center, a foam pad waits for the first set of challengers, bulky vinyl sumo suits empty upon it.

The clock strikes 7:00—it would have all be put back into storage if the two people playing basketball nearby couldn't have been convinced to give it a try.

Student involvement in University-sponsored activities is largely unpredictable.

"It didn't turn out very good, mostly because of Banff," said Trevor Erdmann, the Intramural Sports Coordinator responsible for planning the event.

Competition, in a sense, for student involvement—such as a Valentine's Day functions at Student Housing or the Banff Mountain Film Festival—isn't unfamiliar to event-planners at the REC.

Shea Mack, Assistant Manager of the Recreation Center offers an explanation for why attendance might be difficult to predict.

"The Student Activities side of the University is in flux, there's not a lot of student involvement in it. Student Government does some, there's some staff from the Student Activities. Housing, of course, puts a lot if their own events on...everything's separate, there's no single department that puts on activities."

The Student Activities Board is comprised of six students, with a modest budget, and they focus primarily on bringing concerts to campus, since there is no other underage venue.

The concert of Jeremy Buck and the Bang, which was advertised equally as well as other events, drew a crowd of 45 students.

"At first, people kind of wandered in. It started out slow, but then it picked up. Toward the end of the show, everyone was dancing. It's never really happened that I've seen." Mack said.

By comparison, the last Halloween Dance drew 150 students. Concerts consistently draw 30 to 50 students. However, the Mardi Gras Dance wasn't well attended.

Student activities on campus are ideally tailored to the interests of students, but the best way to gauge what students want is to involve students in planning. There are lots of opportunities for students if they have ideas for events that they would like to suggest.

"We're always looking for new ways for students to be involved with activities. We've had a lot of students this year who have come forward and they're like 'Oh, I want to put on a ski waxing workshop,'" Mack said.

http://www.uas.alaska.edu/whalesong/archives/2008/04_2008/2studentinvolvement.html

Regardless of how fun events might be, the hardest part is getting the word out, Shea admits. "I'd really like to see some sort of campus-wide e-mail list."

Posters, fliers and mailings are the most widely use method of notifying students of upcoming events. For the sumo wrestling competition, staff members walked around campus for an hour dressed in the suits, which seemed to generate considerable interest in the event.

Other resources for finding scheduled events are the UAS webpage, MyUA, and the calendar posted at the entrance to the REC.

Opinion : Sexual Deviancy and the Myspace Generation

What comes first, an emotional relationship or sex?

By: Tyler Preston

What comes first, an emotional relationship or sex?

Like the chicken and the egg, this is a question for the ages, and I'm not sure that we'll ever have an answer.

Hell, I don't even know what I think: I love free sex, but I also love dating and actually "connecting" with people; I think that as a whole, our generation is losing touch with that.

In the same way that Facebook, MySpace and txt-msgng allow us to communicate without actually talking and experiencing a conversation, we are allowing our obsession with sex to prevent us from actually emotionally reaching each other.

A couple weeks before spring break, my good buddy "Adam" met a nice girl named "Eve" with whom he quickly became involved with; she was good conversationalist, total dish, the whole package, basically.

"One hundred percent awesome," according to Adam; he told me that she was relatively liberally-minded about the whole "sex thing" and that they had disclosed of their sexual histories to each other, which basically consisted of Eve's laundry list of exes, since Adam is, shall we say "*inexperienced*" in that department.

He had made the resolution to wait at least a couple of months to be really sure about the whole thing before undertaking his first sexual relationship (which I approve of; virginities should not be taken lightly).

When they saw each other after their Spring Break, Eve sat Adam down and declared that she could not wait so long to have sex with him and therefore that they were breaking up!

Needless to say, Adam was blown away by the news. What I can figure—and what I told him—is that he may have thought that he wanted to give his virginity to her, but apparently he didn't because she's not actually as awesome as his impression of her, which sucks.

What kind of a world do we live in where someone backs out of a promising relationship because sex isn't part of it? When did sex become a requirement to dating?

Our generation appears to have accepted the idea that romance and emotional commitment are dead.

Guys expect girls to put out, and girls expect guys to push their boundaries. Our twice a year come the bacchanals of Spring Break and New Year's, which generally consist of copious amounts of alcohol and an equal portion of unattached copulation.

MTV doesn't exactly help either; we've got twelve-year olds singing "Buy You a Drink" by T-Pain with lyrical content like: "I know the club close at 3 / what's the chance you rollin' with me / back to the crib / show you how I live / let's get drunk forget what we did."

"OMG, you're kidding, right?"

Nope, I'm not. I worked at a summer camp in Maine this summer, and that's really what they listen to and internalize.

Now, I'm not saying that sex is bad, dirty or otherwise. I'm not proposing monogamy on any level.

I'm polyamorous—look it up—and when it comes to sex, frankly, I'm all for it. It's a healthy, natural way to release pent-up energy. Sex is fun, and I would recommend it to anyone who thinks that they're ready for it, provided that they recognize the inherent risks and use protection.

Who we have sex with, when and where we have sex with them, and how many of them there are isn't the problem.

The problem is that our "need" for sex is growing steadily more disproportionate with our "need" for healthy, emotional relationships. The callously expectant nature of the "ideal" sexual lifestyle is destroying our ability to actually be intimate with each other.

Employers Offer Summer Employment to UAS Students

The Lake Room was crowded with booths set up to lure students in to apply for potential summer employment at the annual UAS Job Fair on March 5.

By: Seth Griffin

AUKE BAY - The Lake Room was crowded with booths set up to lure students in to apply for potential summer employment at the annual UAS Job Fair on March 5.

Representatives from roughly 28 different employers met with curious students and spread out fliers and information on tables.

The State of Alaska offered several positions including fire crews, wildlife technicians, oil spill response and office secretaries.

The wide variety of requirements offered by a number of private and state employers gave most students the opportunity to apply for suitable jobs.

Head of UAS Career Services Steve Lang considered the employer turnout good.

"This year, I focused a little more on the summer seasonal tourist jobs because I think those are the ones the students are more interested in and they aren't advertised year round," Lang stated.

According to Lang, the employer response to invitations to this year's fair were high

"As of Monday (prior to the job fair) we had 22 employers signed up. There were about six more that called up and said 'We really want to come.'"

The employers felt the students responded well. Deborah Hart, the Fish & Wildlife Careers for Alaskans Program Coordinator, said turnout was great.

"We've had a number of students who are coming by and picking up fliers and putting their names down and giving me their email addresses," Hart said.

http://www.uas.alaska.edu/whalesong/archives/2008/04_2008/2jobfair.html

Jim Duncan, Director of Operations for Mt. Roberts Tramway found the students receptive. "Everyone here has been polite and nice," Duncan said.

Students who missed the job fair can search for summer jobs on a virtual job fair online on the career services homepage:
<http://www.uas.alaska.edu/careerservices/index.html>.

The webpage includes a list of employers, available positions, and links to their company websites. The information will be available throughout March.

http://www.uas.alaska.edu/whalesong/archives/2008/04_2008/2snowjam.html

Eaglecrest Hosts UAS Snow Jam 2008

The snowfall might have been light but the action was heavy on March 9 for the 2008 Snow Jam at the Eaglecrest Ski Area...

By: Kayla Bevaart

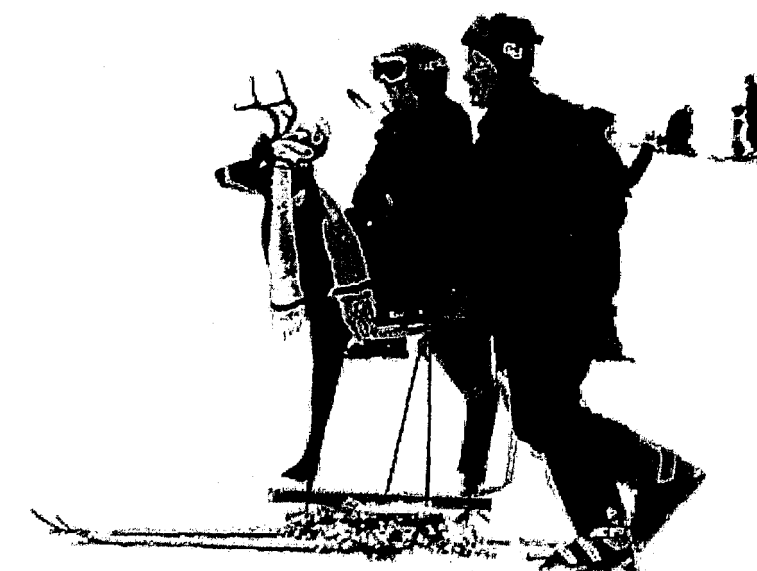


Photo by Kayla Bevaart

A local boy happily rides one of the dummies from the Downhill Dummy Competition at this year's Snow Jam.

DOUGLAS - The snowfall might have been light but the action was heavy on March 9 for the 2008 Snow Jam at the Eaglecrest Ski Area.

The 4th annual Snow Jam, in previous years called the UAS Winter Games, was sponsored by University of Alaska Southeast, Eaglecrest Ski Area, KINY radio and Red Bull.

"It's an opportunity for students of UAS to go up to the slopes and to meet other people in the community. It promotes UAS as not only an educational opportunity, but as a social environment," stated Laura Powers, an Administrative Assistant for the UAS Student Government, from Juneau, Alaska. "It gets students away from academia and it gets them in a social environment to just have fun."

All events were free and included a Nordic Race, Slope Style Competition, Kid's Obstacle Course, Snow Art, Team Relay, Downhill Dummy, and Human Sled Dog Race.

"I especially like seeing people come up to the mountain with no expectations and then leave with the cheesiest smile on their face," said Ashley Saupé, a 20-year-old Marketing Assistant and Snowboard Instructor at Eaglecrest from Anchorage, Alaska. "It's something I look forward to. The smiles I get to see. That makes all the hard work of putting something like this together worthwhile."

The events started at 11:00 a.m. and ended shortly before 5:00 p.m.

The Nordic Race took place on the lower cross-country loop with a total of 5 competitors.

Up on the alpine slopes the Slope Style Competition was by far the most popular event.

Competitors showed off their snowboarding and skiing tricks, resulting in some stylish air time and a few painful looking wipeouts.

The run was closed that morning, but all competitors were given two practice runs to prepare just prior to the competition. Each competitor was judged on two runs.

The Slope Style Competition sported some of the youngest competitors of the day's events as two 4-year-olds showed off their tricks, and even a crazy costume made its way down the slopes as a young boy dressed as an alligator competed as well.

Two Slope Style competitors, 14-year-old McKenzie Wilson and 15-year-old Devan Neal, both freshmen at Juneau Douglas High School and from Juneau, stated that they enjoyed the event and would be back for next year's Snow Jam.

"You think about what you can land and what you think you can't," Wilson said when asked how to prepare for a competition. "You want to push yourself still, but you want to be able to land all of your tricks, so that's what you aim for."

Neal stated that he was slightly nervous before the competition due to the fact that it was his first time. He went on to explain the tricks he performed, which included a Japan, a cork five (540), a 360, and a backside not all of the tricks were landed, Neal admitted.

According to Wilson, the judges and organization of the event was better than last year's competition.

The competition was judged by the Bad Larry Production boys, which included Lucas Merli, Paul Paramore, Will Geiger and Makai Millay.

The Snow Art quickly drew a crowd, as young artists painted on snow banks using spray bottles of colored water.

11-year-old Samantha Thompson, a 5th grader, and 9-year-old Rhian Andrews, a 4th grader, both students at Mendenhall River Community School and from Juneau, collaborated and painted a scene which consisted of their names, flowers, hearts, smiley faces and a sun.

At 3:00 p.m., the Alaskan Celtic rock band, Fire on McGinnis, performed inside the Eaglecrest lodge. The band played a wide variety of instruments including bagpipes, fiddles and pennywhistles.

The Down Hill Dummy event included several entries. Dummies were released from the top of a hill and let to slide down on their own. Entries included a variety of dummies from a skiing deer to a dummy attached to a shopping cart releasing lit fireworks.

Father and son team, Doug Peel, a self-employed carpenter from Juneau, and Peter Peel, an 8th grade student from Dzantik'i Heeni Middle School created their dummy, a skiing tree with an attached sign that read, "Ski with caution, avoid the skiers," in an estimated 15 minutes.

Peel stated that they had other ideas for a dummy which included a Darwinian theme of a hanging ape on a hangman's gallows, a pregnant governor and a two-headed serpent with Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama as the headed creature.

The Downhill Dummy grand prize winner was the "Vehicle Shop," a fully light barbecue with hamburger patties and hot dogs on the grill, and an attached radio and small cooler.

The Human Sled Dog Race, the last event of the day, consisted of two teams of children. One team of 4 young girls and another team of 3 young "sled dog" boys pulling a young girl dressed in Hawaiian attire.

There were abundant prizes for all events which included donations from Nugget Alaskan Outfitters, Foggy Mountain and the Eaglecrest Repair Shop as well as gift certificates to Heritage Coffee, Bullwinkle's Pizza, Fred Meyers, Blockbuster and the UAS Bookstore.

http://www.uas.alaska.edu/whalesong/archives/2008/04_2008/2snowjam.html

The grand prize drawing was a 2008-2009 Eaglecrest season pass.

This year's Snow Jam was a success due to the help of volunteers, Eaglecrest staff, UAS Student Government and Student Activities Board members.